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Kentucky Drug Court celebrating 2005 National Drug Court Month in May Counties carrying out activities across the state

FRANKFORT, Ky., May 5, 2005 — Kentucky Drug Court currently serves 59 counties with 30 counties in the planning stages. Today there are 1,100 individuals enrolled in Drug Court. To recognize the growth and success being experienced by Drug Court in the Commonwealth, Gov. Ernie Fletcher has signed a proclamation declaring May as National Drug Court Month in Kentucky.

One of the goals of National Drug Court Month is to launch a nationwide campaign to educate federal, state and local lawmakers that Drug Court is more cost effective than repeated incarceration for drug offenders. This year's theme for Kentucky Drug Court Month is "Inspiration, Motivation and Support." The Kentucky Court of Justice will celebrate with activities at Drug Court sites throughout the state (see list below).

Hundreds of Drug Court participants nationwide, including 28 from Kentucky, will be graduating May 20, which is National Drug Court Commencement Day. Kentucky Drug Court also is unveiling a new component of the Drug Court program in May. The Drug Court Department, operated by the Administrative Office of the Courts, has created an inspiration book that will be passed among participants each week to aid in their recovery. In addition, participants will be asked to share with each other an object, such as a poem, a reading or a token, which inspired them during the week. This new component will allow individuals to encourage each other as they progress through Drug Court.

How Drug Court Works

Drug Court is designed to offer a criminal justice environment that stops illicit drug use and related criminal activity, and to promote a positive life change through substance abuse education and treatment. The program consists of three phases and aftercare, and lasts an average of one to two years.

Court staff and participants work together to develop individual program plans with specific responsibilities and goals with timetables. Plans include group, family and individual counseling; frequent and random urine testing; education and vocational training; scheduled payments of restitution, child support and court fees; and health and
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community activities. Participants report directly to their Drug Court judge, who rewards progress and sanctions noncompliance. When participants successfully complete the program, charges may be dismissed through diversion, or conditional discharge may be granted through probation. Judges who participate in Drug Court volunteer their time to the program, and much of the program's funding comes from federal grants and state matching funds approved through the Kentucky General Assembly.

Drug Court Success

The success of Drug Court is being measured by the lives changed and the cost savings to Kentucky taxpayers. Since the program was implemented in 1993, the state has saved \$24.2 million by graduating 1,700 individuals from Drug Court instead of paying for their incarceration. A 2004 University of Kentucky evaluation revealed that two years after graduating from Drug Court, only 20 percent of Kentucky Drug Court graduates were convicted of a new felony offense, as opposed to 57.3 percent of non-Drug Court participants (with similar charges) who were convicted of a new felony offense.

The Administrative Office of the Courts is the administrative arm of the Kentucky Court of Justice and supports the activities of more than 3,400 court system employees, including the elected offices of justices, judges and circuit court clerks. The AOC also executes the Judicial Branch budget.

2005 National Drug Court Month Activities in Kentucky

Adair/Casey Counties

- Proclamation signing by mayor and judge executive in both counties.
- Drug Court participants will assist with Adair/Casey County Pride cleanup activities.
- Adair County participants will plant flowers on the Columbus town square as part of the annual city beautification day sponsored by Renaissance Columbia.

Ballard/Carlisle/Fulton/Hickman Counties

- Drug Court participants will have baby showers for new and expected drug-free babies.
- Celebration of graduates at graduation ceremony on May 23.
- Drug Court family picnic at Columbus Belmont State Park.
- Yard sale and cook out for Relay for Life

Bell County

- Participants will be collecting soda can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House, will assist with cleanup and restoration of His Will Ministry's recovery house, will help with the Kentucky Mountain Laurel Festival by decorating floats and cleanup, and will work on cleanup of county roads.

Bourbon/Scott/Woodford Counties

- Graduation ceremony will take place May 20 at 4 p.m. in Versailles as part of Drug Court graduations throughout the nation.

Campbell County

- Juvenile Drug Court graduation will be May 5.
- Drug Court participants will volunteer in the Great American Cleanup.

Christian County

- Drug Court participants will assist with a city cleanup day.
- Adult and Juvenile Drug Courts will hold graduation ceremonies May 20 as part of Drug Court graduations throughout the nation

Clinton/Cumberland/Monroe/Russell/Wayne Counties

- Local media will print articles recognizing the Drug Court judges and team members who volunteer their time to the program.
- Graduation ceremony will be held.

Daviess County

- Mayor and county judge executive will sign proclamations for Drug Court Month.
- Graduation ceremony will be May 9.
- Drug Court participants will clean up the riverfront following the annual Barbeque Festival May 15.

Fayette County

- Graduation ceremony will be May 12.
- Drug Court participants will help build three Habitat for Humanity homes in Lexington.

Greenup/Lewis Counties

- Participants will be collecting soda can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House.
- There will be a cookout for participants and families to celebrate their sobriety.

Hardin County

- Participants will be collecting soda can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House.
- Participants will assist with Repair A Fair, a community project to repair homes for the elderly and low-income people in the county.
- A potluck dinner will be held for participants and their families.

Harlan County

- Graduation ceremony will be May 17.

Henry/Oldham/Trimble Counties

- Breakfast will be May 3 at the Drug Court office to honor Drug Court participants.
- Open house is planned on May 24 to introduce the program to the community.

Johnson/Lawrence/Martin Counties

- Drug Court Month proclamations will be signed by county judge executives in all three counties.
- Participants will be collecting soda can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House.
- Graduation ceremony will be May 26.
- There will be interviews with a local radio talk show on May 5 and May 24, and public service announcements will air on local radio stations.

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Kenton County

- Graduation ceremony will be May 11.
- Drug Court participants will volunteer in the Great American Cleanup.

Knott County

- Graduation ceremony will take place May 20 as part of the nationwide Drug Court graduations.

Knox/Laurel Counties

- Drug Court participants will assist with PRIDE Woodcreek cleanup.
- Graduation ceremony will be held on May 9.
- Picnic for participants and families will be May 14.
- Drug Court participants are taking part in Relay for Life and the soda can tab collection for the Ronald McDonald House.
- Juvenile Drug Court is participating in Network Day at Union College to provide information about Drug Court
- 5th Congressional Drug Court office will host an open house May 13.

Letcher County

- Graduation ceremony will take place May 20 as part of the nationwide Drug Court graduations.

Owsley County

- Graduation ceremony will take place May 20 as part of the nationwide Drug Court graduations.

Pike County

- Graduation ceremony will take place May 20 as part of the nationwide Drug Court graduations.
- Bike ride and rally from City Park to Jenny Wiley Lake and return.

Warren County

- Adult Drug Court graduation ceremony will be May 23.
- Participants will be collecting soda can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House.
- Picnic is planned for participants and their families
- Mayor will sign proclamation for Drug Court Month.
- Juvenile participants will hold a car wash at McDonalds, assist local Kiwanis Club in Soap Box Derby Race, and serve lunch at the Warren County Justice Center.

Whitley County

- Juvenile participants will plant flowers at the courthouse.
- Pizza party is planned for the participants.
- Graduation ceremony will take place May 20 as part of the nationwide Drug Court graduations.